



IdahoStatesman.com

IDAHO'S #1 WEBSITE FOR NEWS AND INFORMATION

Traffic
[Live cameras](#)
[Traffic map](#)
[Construction](#)

Boise, ID
High 72 | Low 45
Currently: 57°
Thu 80 | 52 | Fri 85 | 56 | Sat 84 | 54
Today's 6 Precision Forecast | **Scott Dorval**



SUBSCRIBE TODAY
Idaho Statesman
Subscriber services

[HOME](#) [NEWS](#) [SPORTS](#) [BUSINESS](#) [POLITICS](#) [OPINION](#) [ENTERTAINMENT](#) [LIFESTYLES](#) [OUTDOORS](#) [SPECIAL CONTENT](#) [CLASSIFIEDS](#) [SHOPPING](#)

SEARCH:

All

SEARCH

Web Search powered by **YAHOO!** SEARCH

QUICK LINKS: [Obituaries](#) [Crime](#) [Idaho Economy](#) [Thrifty Living](#) [Forums](#)

News > Opinion

Susan Patrick: Idaho deserves praise for offering classes over the Internet

READER'S VIEW VIRTUAL LEARNING

BY SUSAN PATRICK - Idaho Statesman

Published: 12/27/08

[Comments \(0\)](#) | [Recommend \(2\)](#)



[Enlarge Font](#) [Decrease Font](#)

[See All Photo Galleries](#)

A rural Idaho 10th-grader practices a Mandarin Chinese lesson with a student in Beijing.

A Caldwell elementary school student, homebound with illness, completes her math assignment and turns it in to her teacher with a mouse click.

A Franklin County physics student watches a simulation created by NASA and discusses the formula and concept with her class over the Internet, while her teacher facilitates the discussion.

A struggling student retakes Algebra I with a readily available online teacher and tutor, allowing her to get help when she needs it and move at her own pace without being ostracized by other students or interrupting the lecture.

These are examples of how online learning is helping students attain academic achievement in ways never before possible. Online learning works for a diverse range of students and helps meet their individual needs. Students receive a customized, personalized education using a new delivery model that is preparing them for college and lifelong learning.

Idaho's education leaders should be applauded for their good work - Idaho is a national leader in online learning. In a recent national report, "Online Learning Policy and Practice Survey: A Survey of the States," Idaho ranked third out of 50 states for forward-thinking state policies supporting student opportunities through K-12 online learning. Idaho is one of 21 states to allow full-time online program options. The rankings reflect an effort to transform academic offerings to meet the needs of K-12 students.

By expanding online learning opportunities available to students, Idaho is a leader in providing students access to a world-class education. Currently across Idaho, more than 9,000 students are taking at least one supplemental, online class, while an additional 5,000+ students are enrolled in full-time virtual charter school programs.

Online learning has grown at 30 percent annually over the past 10 years in the United States. It is estimated that more than a million American K-12 students are enrolled in some form of online learning, and Clayton Christensen from Harvard Business School projects that 50 percent of all high school courses in America will be offered online by 2019.

Why is online learning catching on so quickly? Thirty-four percent of high schools in the United States do not offer Advanced Placement courses. Now, students can pursue these online. Every child learns differently, and online learning provides individualized instruction at a student's own pace. Students who are being bullied or tired of distractions in the classroom find that taking courses online allows them to focus academically and achieve more. Students missing required graduation credits because of scheduling conflicts or past failures can catch up by taking online courses and graduate on time. Online learning also can be an answer for students pursuing elite sports, artistic careers, or those who are homebound due to illness.



Find a Job careerbuilder.com

Keywords: **Location:** **Search**

e.g., registered nurse City, State or Zip

Ads by pulse360

Waterbury News: 'Mom Earns \$7k/Mo At Home!'
Read The Story of How A Waterbury Mom Turned \$1.97 Into \$7359.65
[SarahsMoneyBlog.com](#)

"Waterbury Mom Cures Her Wrinkles Forever!"
Read How A Mom Combined 2 Products And Made Her Wrinkles Vanish...
[www.kimsnewskin.com](#)

Waterbury Man Makes \$10,000 A Month
I got fired! I now earn more than my old boss. Find out how on my blog
[masongetsgreen.com](#)

[Get listed here](#)

But beyond meeting the immediate unique needs of specific students, online education may be essential for our nation's long-term success in this globally competitive world. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has identified key skills such as technology literacy, self-directed learning, and problem-solving that are explicitly addressed through online learning. Meanwhile, nations such as China, Korea, Singapore, Mexico, Turkey and New Zealand have leapfrogged ahead of the United States to embrace online learning as an essential part of expanding access to their education systems.

So kudos to Idaho for its early embrace of the future of education! The challenge now is to make sure that embrace is broad enough to provide every student in Idaho access to online learning opportunities that ensure they are prepared for life after high school.

Susan Patrick is the president and chief executive officer of iNACOL, the International Association for K-12 Online Learning, a non-profit association representing the interests of practitioners, providers and students involved in online learning worldwide. She is the former director of the Office of Educational Technology at the U.S. Department of Education.

OPTIONS: [Most Read Stories](#) | [Story Comments](#) | [Email story](#) | [Print story](#)

Story Comments




We welcome comments but ask that you remain on topic. Some comments may be reprinted elsewhere in the site or in the newspaper. Comments that are profane, personal attacks or otherwise inappropriate or are off topic are subject to removal. Repeat offenders will be blocked. Do not flag comments merely because you disagree with the comment.

[more about comments here.](#)

POWERED BY 

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

Submit

Comments:  0 Showing:  Oldest first 

More comments on this story:

- Assessed home values plunge in Ada County
- 14-year-old Caldwell boy charged with first-degree murder of his father
- Tamarack Resort may get new owner
- Idaho Rep. Mike Simpson to President Obama: Leave car dealers alone
- Idaho Power faces pressure to go greener
- Men's Journal names Boise's North End one of the best neighborhoods in America
- Driver of ValleyRide vehicle that hit cyclist on leave
- HP to cut more workers
- Yellowstone workers killed problem wolf
- As a parent, are you concerned with 'sexting'?

[Idaho Jobs](#)

Free Local Job Search! Find good paying Idaho jobs.
Employment-Service.org

[idaho christian singles](#)

idaho christian singles Meet single Christians in your area.
www.singleC.com

[Story Job Listings](#)

Found: 237 jobs in your area. Make \$15 - \$100 / hour with bonuses.
Career-Finder.org/Story

Ads by Yahoo!

IdahoStatesman.com

SECTIONS: [home](#) | [news](#) | [sports](#) | [business](#) | [politics](#) | [opinion](#) | [entertainment](#) | [lifestyles](#) | [outdoors](#) | [special content](#) | [classifieds](#) | [shopping](#)

CUSTOMER SERVICE: [terms of service & privacy policy](#) | [about us](#) | [work for us](#) | [contact us](#) | [Newspapers in Education](#) | [Buy Photos](#)

